

6/8

T H E
W I N T E R - P I E C E.

A
P O E M.

By the Breath of God Frost is given. JOB, xxxvii. 10.

He giveth the Snow like Wool: He scattereth the Hoar-
frost like Ashes. He casteth out his Ice like Morfels:
Who can stand before his Cold? He sendeth out his
Word, and melteth them. PSAL. cxlvii. 16, 17, 18.

L O N D O N :

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WINTER-PIECE

P O E M.

By the Poetess, Charlotte M. Wilmerding
He gives the world the word: the language of the
poet like a flower, the world is for the
Who can find the word for the world of the
World, and the world is for the world.

Printed by W. B. Wilmerding and S. C. C. C.
Appl. 2nd by W. B. Wilmerding and S. C. C. C.

T H E
P R E F A C E.

THE following Poem was wrote in the beginning of the year 1740; but not intended for publication. At the desire of a friend, the copy was lent him. He handed it to others, and those again to others. By this means, and the carelessness of the author concerning it, it was passed from hand to hand, in such a manner, that it has been lost to him upwards of twenty years. Upon his meeting with it again, as he was apprized many faulty copies had been taken and dispersed by different hands, he thought proper to submit this to the press, to prevent the appearance of a worse.

The reader will readily perceive, that the author's aim was to give a short and comprehensive
description

description of some circumstances which attended the sharp and calamitous event he celebrates. Most of those he has noticed fell under his own observation, with many others which he has omitted. He is apprehensive, it is best, in general, for authors not to make the most of a subject, as that may prove tedious and burdensome, though impertinence be avoided. This notion may perhaps have led him to contract too much; to which necessary avocations of a different nature have contributed. For poetry is by no means his business, and has been very seldom his practice.

Little solicitous whether this essay may endure the revolution of years to come, or enjoy but the short immortality of a month, he freely resigns it to the pleasure of his readers, and the judgment of his betters.

T H E

T H E

WINTER-PIECE.

THE brumal solstice past; th' expiring
year,

With languid mien, to breathe her last
was near;

When, from the freezing pole, was gliding seen
An apparition quaint, and chilling keen.

Old *Hyems*, mounted on his cloudy carr,
Came driving, harness'd for a wintry war.
With nose of purple, and with cheeks of blue;
His glitt'ring eyes display'd a crimson hue.
Bald was his crown; his hoary locks were thin,
A beard of icicles adown his chin.

B

A foggy

A foggy mantle o'er his shoulders laid ;
 Wild hazy fleet around his temples play'd.
 One hand the reins, and one his weapons bore ;
 Of freezing particles a dreadful store.
 A sullen fierceness bent his rugged brow,
 Portending dolour to the world below.

He stopp'd, and roll'd about his twinkling eyes ;
 Then rising, with a piercing voice he cries—

“ Hear, giddy mortals, who regardless run
 Down folly's torrent ; swift to be undone !
 Ensnar'd by toys, to truth and virtue blind,
 You lasting substance flee, and grasp the wind.
 Lur'd by insatiate luxury, you roll,
 To ransack nature's stores, from pole to pole.
 Here av'rice freezes ; there ambition fires ;
 Lust boils and rages in impure desires.
 Now rebel passions rule, now slavish fear,
 With guilt, the harbinger of fell despair.

Pride

Pride stalks with haughty port ; prophaneness
reigns ;

Fierce rage and madness revel in your veins.

Conscience, like *Echo*, dwindled to a sound,

Not in your hearts, but in your mouths is found.

Religion, tho' profess'd, is shunn'd, disguis'd ;

In shew applauded, but in truth despis'd.

Gold, pleasure, title, fashion, idols all ;

These are the gods ador'd by great and small.

Since you bright wisdom's sacred call refuse ;

Prefer your dreams, your own delusions chuse ;

Commission'd by th' Eternal thus I come ;

A scourge to lash your roving senses home."

He said—and calling to the wintry winds,

His magazine of freezing darts unbinds ;

In æther high his dreadful standard rears,

And soon distress in various shapes appears.

Eurus and *Boreas*, rous'd from their repose,

Assum'd their swelling vanns, and upward rose.

Like

Like prowling lions eager for their prey,
 They rend the peaceful skies to force their way.
 The air they roll in billows from afar ;
 They burst the clouds, t' increase the stormy war.
 The mountain tops the flying furies tear ;
 Th' affrighted region quakes throughout for fear.

The pungent particles are driven round ;
 Each pungent particle inflicts a wound.
 The strongest forts of nature they assail,
 And over water, earth, and air, prevail.

In pearly drops the frozen rain descends ;
 In snowy flakes the frothy liquid ends.
 Unwholesome damps, and reeky stench rise,
 And fogs, from spongy fens, eclipse the skies.

By day, if day such twilight may be stil'd,
 Where *Phæbus* late in peerless glory smil'd,
 Divested of his rays he now appears ;
 Upon his face a bloody mask he wears :

Within

Within his orb the smould'ring crimson seems,
And faintly moves, as 'twere his dying gleams.

The feather'd race their pain and terror shew,
By diff'rent ways they various points pursue :
Some hide in hay-ricks ; some to barns repair ;
Some take their flight to seek a warmer air ;
Some tear their little hearts with tender cries ;
Some tumble, stiff'ned, as they wing the skies ;
Some, bootless, in th' abyss of æther roam ;
And some, distress'd, to human dwellings come.

So starving Ægypt, when its plenty fled,
Its future freedom truck'd for present bread.

Stripp'd of their smiling flow'rs and vivid green,
The spacious plains betray a fainting mien.
The rising hills above, the vales below,
Lie crusted o'er, and spread with sheets of snow.
The grassy blade but here and there appears,
And sparkling, bristles up like pointed spears.

C

The

The wither'd shrubs with hoary pressures bend ;
 The shatter'd trees their lifeless arms extend.
 Fast in the furrow sticks the useless plow,
 Froze in the glebe, and whiten'd o'er with snow.

The lowing herds, beneath the rimy hedge,
 Flock all together, close together wedge ;
 There, helpless, with the 'plaining as and steed,
 Expect the careful peasant with their feed.

The shepherd roams, and weary, with his
 prong
 Supports his feet, and guides his steps along.
 In vain he ranges ev'ry wild around ;
 No bleating ewe, alas ! is to be found :
 In vain he calls ! the simple flocks below
 Are shut in caverns deep of drifted snow.

In icy fetters lie the silver streams,
 From the minutest rills to royal Thames.
 For freedom fam'd, at first, th' imperial wave
 Disdain'd to sink into a creeping slave ;

And tiding up his forces from the sea,
 Strove, like a British stream, for liberty.
 The swelling surge the brittle substance breaks ;
 Before him down he rolls the crackling wrecks ;
 Then clashing side by side the floating isles,
 Huge shelves on shelves of brilliant crystal piles.
 At length they fix, and all his strength defy ;
 Like cowards, when they can no longer fly ;
 With fresh supplies, and forces all around,
 They basely seize, and chain him to the ground.

Tall ships are fasten'd in the glitt'ring waste,
 And mock the fury of the strongest blast.
 Ashore the waterman complaining stands,
 With aching heart, and unavailing hands ;
 His skiff beholds on icy mounts up-heav'd ;
 Stripp'd of his means, and of his bread bereav'd.

Here shatter'd barges lie, on barges tost ;
 There lighters 'mongst the rugged shelves are
 lost.

The

The fishes freeze below ; and high above,
 A-foot in crowds the vent'rous rabble move.
 Where gallant fleets of late were floating seen
 Large streets are built, and traders now convene ;
 Rich dealers spread their various kinds of ware,
 And thousands traffic in the rocky fair.
 Whole carcases they roast, and curling high,
 From hearths of ice, the smoke ascends the sky.

Peerless *Augusta* droops, and boasts no more
 Her flowing currents, and her busy shore.
 Her pomp despoil'd, a shatter'd weed she wears ;
 A mournful change in all her streets appears :
 Her streets, where multitudes were wont to
 throng,
 Posting like bees in eager swarms along,
 Lie choak'd with rugged hills of ice and snow ;
 Drays, cars, and coaches, overturn'd below.

The brawny steed, in hoary harness bound,
 Sore lash'd with dangling icicles around,

In

In vain collects his force, and strains to draw,
The slipp'ry pavement quick eludes his paw :
Prostrate he falls ; in painful silence lies :
Unnerv'd with cold ; unable more to rise.

The needy passengers their fingers blow ;
Now painful stand, and fearful now they go :
One sprains a tendon ; headlong others fall ;
Some break their tender limbs, and bleeding
sprawl.

Depriv'd of labour, crowds of helpless poor,
Urg'd, for support, to beg from door to door,
Half-starv'd abroad, and wrung by want at
home,
With chatt'ring teeth, and rumbling entrails
roam :

Their pining infants weep in vain for bread ;
The fretful parents with their infants dead ;
Desponding mothers, with a doleful cry,
Subside upon the ground, and hapless die !

D

Now

Now fell disease appears; now phthisis reigns;
 Unhappy mortals sink beneath their pains;
 Straining their wat'ry eyes, they wheeze and
 groan,

Cough their complaints, and murmur out their
 moan.

Cold agues shake; rough asthmas stop their
 breath;

Abounding fun'erals shew the spoils of death.

Proud human weakness, fond of pompous shows,
 Thro' life and death displays its broken vows!

In triumph winter rides, and all below,
 All that have being, life, or sense, must bow.
 Distressful nature weeps, with languid eyes;
 Deep, throughout all her works, in mourning
 lies:

Vile men except: The sottish, and the proud,
 The wanton rout, luxurious, and the lewd.
 These join against the judgment to declaim,
 Nor think the reason why, nor whence it came.

To

To ev'ry point of folly still they veer,
 Seeking they know not what, they know not
 where.

Now fullen fit; or wand'ring now they roam;
 Restless abroad, and discontent at home.
 From vice to vice insensibly they go,
 Led by their fatal, false, bewitching foe.
 Their days in feasts, their nights in revels fly:
 Few call to mind, that all are born to die;
 That after death the tainted soul must go
 The doleful path of ever-during woe;
 Who lives in pleasure here must end in pain:
 False are their hopes, and all their efforts vain!

True Piety, at length, all bath'd in tears,
 Mov'd in behalf of the distress'd, appears:
 A thinking few, of mortal men the best,
 Lift up their hands to Heaven for the rest.
 The right-begotten pray'r from souls sincere
 All-gracious Heaven condescends to hear;

While

While pompous rites may pass unnotic'd by;
 Meer flitting forms, that just arise, and die.

Westward a glorious light began t' appear,
 More bright than Phoebus, more than Phoebe clear.
 The queen of virtues was descending seen,
 Sweet *Charity*, eternally serene;
 In good delighting, yet with ill unmov'd,
 And loving even when she's not lov'd;
 Tho' grave, yet chearful; and tho' chaste, yet
 free;

With meekness rises; stoops with dignity;
 In affluence humble, and in bounty great;
 On earth compassionate; in Heaven sweet:
 Her face irradiates an immortal bloom,
 Which ever was, and ever is to come;
 Quick are her eyes, most lovely to behold,
 Like diamonds bright, in silver sockets roll'd;
 In nice proportion all her features rise,
 Each one a beauty of no middle size;

Naked

Naked her feet as truth, and spotless shone,
 More white than iv'ry, or the *Parian* stone :
 A golden wreath entwin'd her splendid brows,
 Inlaid with flow'rs of never-fading hues ;
 Her vest of lilies rais'd in Paradise,
 By wisdom mingled in a neat device,
 And richly studded o'er with starry gems,
 The void bespangles with celestial beams.

No arms of terror to mankind she wears,
 But store of blessings in her hand she bears ;
 Patience attends, and Truth, and gentle Peace,
 With pure Religion, pointing to her face ;
 Fair Innocence, with kind Compassion join'd,
 Each virtue that adorns the heav'nly mind ;
 Ten thousand shining nymphs around are seen,
 Inferior graces that attend their queen ;
 Light joy and harmony about her spring ;
 The graces all, and all the virtues sing.

On suff'ring nature first she casts her eyes,
 Then turns with ardent sweetness tow'rd the skies ;

E

Implores

Implores the Great Supreme in strains divine :
 The Sov'reign Goodness gives th' approving sign---
 Accepts her humble suit --- says, " Let it be."---
 Rough *Hyems* trembles at the great decree ;
Eurus and *Boreas* turn their tails and fly,
 And bear him backward down the Northern sky.

No longer dim appears the lamp of day ;
 The hazy scurf begins to peel away ;
 His wonted radiance by degrees returns,
 And once again a golden flame he burns :
 The gloom dispers'd, t'unbind the earth he bends,
 Prone, swiftly 'midst his ruddy beams descends ;
 Breaks th' icy chains; dissolves the settled snows;
 O'er ev'ry hill and thro' each dale he goes ;
 The groves he enters ; pierces thro' the woods ;
 He sweeps the winter down in swollen floods ;
 The glebe he opens ; sets the waters free ;
 Fish, fowl, and beast, and man, at liberty.

Calm and serene th' æthereal vault appears,
 While smiling Phœbus drooping nature cheers.

With

With dewy moisture mix'd, and gentle show'rs,
 His genial warmth upon the soil he pours :
 Its former green the springing mead resumes ;
 Each vale revives, and ev'ry mountain blooms ;
 The shrubs arise ; the trees are budding seen ;
 And springing flow'rs adorn th' enamel'd green ;
 Leaves, blossoms, fruits, their spicy fragrance
 yield,
 Teem with delight, and perfume ev'ry field.

The fluid azure fill'd with life is seen ;
 Unnumber'd movements crowd the grand machine ;

Large flitting fowls in all their kinds appear,
 Stretching their trackless ways in full career ;
 The smaller frisk, and hop from spray to spray,
 Or sporting round in circling mazes play ;
 The tuneful spread their shining plumes on high,
 And with melodious music fill the sky ;
 The yielding æther melts in silver sounds ;
 From distant grotts th' enchanting lay rebounds ;

Pin'd

Pin'd *Echo* springs amid the joyful throng,
New life assumes, and joins the pleasing song.

Now smiling industry o'erspreads the plains ;
And wholesome labours exercise the swains ;
The flow of plenty now begins t' appear,
The kindly promise of a glorious year.
Just Gratitude her thankful duty pays ;
Ascends th' Empyrean with immortal lays ;
Hails rising nature, fresh renew'd and free,
And chants the praise of Heav'n, and heav'nly
Charity.

T H E E N D.